



White Letter #7

Sea Warrior Ministry Council

Operational Ministry Center/Regional Ministry Center



Wanted

Spiritually Fit Sea Warriors

The threat of global terrorism presents new challenges for the military and, more specifically, for our nation's naval forces. The Navy and Marine Corps must now plan and execute in ways never witnessed before; the operational paradigms of the past no longer apply. The Navy's new Fleet Response Plan may translate into more frequent and/or lengthier deployments. As ships are equipped with more advanced technology, they become smarter and crew size decreases. For both Marines and sailors, however, the need for substantive ministry remains a constant.

Sea Chaplaincy 21 (SC 21) is our Chaplain Corps' response to Sea Power 21. SC 21 captures the Chaplain Corps' value-added contribution to the Sea Services: spiritually fit sea warriors who are critical to the success of today's Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The climate and challenges of today's military demand a 21st century, transformed model of ministry. The Sea Warrior Ministry Council (SWMC), the Operational Ministry Center (OMC), and the Regional Ministry Center (RMC) are key components of our transformation.

The Chief of Chaplains' Religious Requirements Oversight Council (RROC) has approved the SWMC as the most viable model for 21st century Sea Service ministry. This White Letter explains how the SWMC, the OMC, and the RMC will operate, and describes the vital role each will play in ensuring all sea warriors and their families receive the quality ministry they need and deserve.

(Given the complex nature of this topic, White Letter #7 is more extensive than those that have preceded it. The information contained within, however, is critical to an understanding of this radical new paradigm for ministry in the 21st Century.)

WHITE LETTER #7
APRIL 2005

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Quite often history appears to repeat itself. George Santayana warned, *"Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."* In the early 1970s, just as the Vietnam War was winding down, force shaping, or downsizing, became a reality of life for all branches of the service. Throughout the 70s the naval services cut back on billets and ships, and the Chaplain Corps, as a component of this military transformation, explored new ministry delivery models. On 23 March 1974, following a Chief of Chaplains' two-year study on the delivery of ministry in fleet concentration areas, the Chief of Naval Operations authorized the establishment of Fleet Religious Support Activities (FRSA).¹ The FRSA was created to meet the emergent needs of its time. This ministry delivery model represented transformation, innovation, and an attempt to achieve efficiencies through a cooperative approach to ministry. The establishment of FRSA marked the first time in the modern era that a chaplain was assigned to an administrative command position. Chaplains were ordered into an FRSA UIC and were concurrently assigned to operational platforms when ordered to do so by their FRSA chaplain-commander.

The watchword for FRSA ministry was "Get to the ships." The four major functions that drove the ministerial efforts of personnel assigned to these ministry delivery platforms were:

- 1) Development of a team approach to ministry;
- 2) Assignment of chaplains as circuit riders;
- 3) Coordination of the shore-based ministry of operational chaplains not deployed;
- 4) Development and supervision of an extensive lay-leader program.

Some commanders and chaplains praised the establishment of the Norfolk-based FRSA and labeled it a huge success, while others viewed it as a mistake. The development and establishment of the FRSA was controversial from its origin, and the debate continued through its disestablishment in the late 70s. While the success or failure of the FRSA will probably be debated for decades to come, its creation represents a valid and, some would say, prophetic attempt to meet the emergent ministry needs of an institution in transition.

The establishment of the Dependents Assistance Board (DAB) marks the next evolutionary attempt to create an alternative ministry delivery platform. The San Diego-based DAB operated from the 1980s into the 1990s, during what is described as the build-up of the 600-ship navy. The DAB differed in structure from the FRSA; it was headed by a chaplain serving as a director, not a commanding officer. Working with a series of memoranda of understanding, and through the effective networking of the DAB director with operational

¹ LT Stephen O. Wallace, CHC, USNR. "The Fleet Religious Support Activity," 1985.

commanders, ships' chaplains stood duty days at the DAB while in port. The DAB provided one-stop shopping for deployed commanders and their families and represented a centralized, coordinated effort to provide ministry across operational command lines.

While the FRSA and DAB enjoyed their strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures, both represented alternative models for ministry at times of institutional transition. Chaplains assigned to both ministry delivery models provided quality ministry and met the spiritual needs of sea service personnel in an era of institutional transformation.

The transformational changes of today's military demand that we explore new, more efficient models of ministry delivery. Every staff corps now operates across command, claimant, and even service lines; Sea Service leadership has demanded more efficiencies from every department, every command, every staff corps, and every person. For the past eighteen months, your Chaplain Corps leadership has explored a number of potential new ministry paradigms. The discussion has been open, honest, and at times very animated. The RROC has debated the issue extensively and quite passionately. After studying the models of the past (FRSA and DAB) and exploring new options for the future, these Chaplain Corps leaders agreed on a ministry delivery model the Chief of Chaplains has named the **Sea Warrior Ministry Council (SWMC)**, a council that will direct both OMCs and RMCs. While all agree this model possesses strengths, assets, and potential dangers, all agree it is a model with great promise...a model designed to meet the emergent needs of the Sea Services in transition...a model that builds on the legacy of the past with eyes focused on the future.

SEA CHAPLAINCY 21 AND THE SEA WARRIOR MINISTRY COUNCIL (SWMC)

Upon his assumption of duties as CNO, Admiral Vern Clark vowed to transform the Navy; *Sea Power 21* is the vision driving this transformation. One of the most important components of Sea Power 21 is that of the *Sea Warrior*, the institutional process for creating the sailor-warriors of the future. Chaplains figure significantly in the development of a 21st Century sea warrior. Naval leadership agrees that our sea warriors are tri-dimensional persons composed of body, mind, and spirit. Military chaplaincy was first established to meet the spiritual needs of our nations' warriors; that legacy continues today as we focus on our role of producing spiritually fit sea warriors for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

The CNO has asked every community in the Navy to develop a *Human Capital Strategy* focused on meeting the current and future operational needs of our country and, in particular, meeting the needs of sea warriors. As the first Chief of Chaplains designated as community leader, Rear Admiral Louis Iasiello, his Deputies Rear Admirals Robert Burt and Harold Robinson, and Senior Enlisted Advisor, RPCM Harold Terry, initiated what they describe as a *Human Care Strategy* for the Chaplain Corps. Sea Chaplaincy 21 is designed to make us an operational-centric staff corps, enhance our capabilities to fulfill our mission of producing spiritually fit sea warriors, and train chaplains to succeed in the very specialized institutional ministry of naval chaplaincy. Sea Chaplaincy 21 is, therefore, an ambitious transformational architecture; it will take months and perhaps years to implement.

SEA WARRIOR MINISTRY CENTER (SWMC): STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

The Sea Warrior Ministry Council will play a significant role in Sea Chaplaincy 21's mission; it is designed to empower Religious Ministry Teams (RMT) to meet the current and emergent spiritual needs of Sea Service personnel. It is critical that every chaplain familiarize him or herself with the mission and structure of the SWMC, its OMCs and RMCs, and the critical role these centers will play in the lives of every chaplain and Religious Program Specialist in our Corps.

The SWMC is the coordinating body for religious ministry in a geographic area. Composed of the senior chaplains of the various lines of ministry represented in an area, the SWMC will meet on a regular basis to plan and execute common plans that provide horizontal integration to ministry functions. The Chair of the Council will be rotated between the Senior Regional and Operational Chaplains. This Council will not usurp any line authority but will have its members utilize the authority of their line commanders as appropriate to ensure the legitimate religious needs in an area are supported in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Each geographic area with an SWMC will have an SOP that will guide the operation of the SWMC permitting it to be customized to the unique characteristics of the local region. All senior echelon commanders in the area will be briefed and will approve the SOP before the SWMC begins formal operations to ensure religious ministry remains always a function of command.

See Diagram One: Appendix

OPERATIONAL MINISTRY CENTER (OMC)

The SWMC will have an OMC, organized to ensure mission-centric ministry. As such, it has been placed under Regional Support Organization/Super DESRON (RSO/DESRON). RSO/DESRONs have recently been created to be the fleet-centric commands responsible for the operational support of all ships in a fleet concentration area. (Note: Super DESRONs are not the same as Tactical DESRONs, which remain as part of the fleet but do not act in a regional capacity.) RSO/DESRONs are subordinate commands to the Surface Force Type Commanders.

Chaplains and RPs will be ordered to RSO/DESRONs and subsequently assigned as RMTs from the OMC to deploying Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs), Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESGs), Surface Strike Groups (SSGs), and other deployed configurations. In the most recent Chaplain Corps personnel alignment plan, only large decks and wings are assigned permanent RMTs. OMC RMTs will join a deploying Group when they stand up and will remain with that Group throughout its Fleet Response Plan cycle. For example, a chaplain may be assigned to a CSG ministry team three months before deployment, throughout the deployment, and for a few months in the ship's post-deployment phase. The chaplain may spend the majority of his or her time providing ministry to a cruiser in the CSG but will also be able to provide ministry to other platforms and units attached to the CSG. Senior chaplains on the Navy's big decks will be formally assigned as Group Chaplains through additional duty orders to an ESG or CSG. . This Group Chaplain will be responsible for assigning the OMC RMTs as needed within the Group, meeting operational needs while maintaining the RMTs unit identity. Once the Group has completed its cycle, OMC RMTs will return to the RSO for further assignment.

RSO/DESRON Commodores will be the reporting seniors for all RMT personnel assigned to their RSO/DESRONs. When assigned to deploying groups, the Group Commander becomes the operational reporting senior. OMC directors will play a critical role in the performance evaluations of all RMT personnel. Commodores and Group Commanders will follow PERSCOM guidance on actual signatories of all reports and evaluations. Chaplains will be evaluated both for their fleet and operational unit performance. Under this system, OMC directors will enjoy direct input in the evaluation process of chaplains assigned to their supervision. Thus, chaplains will have both fleet and command ministry responsibilities.

See Diagrams Two and Three: Appendix

REGIONAL MINISTRY CENTER (RMC)

A further component of the Sea Warrior Ministry Counsel (SWMC) will be the establishment of Regional Ministry Centers (RMCs). RMCs will be geographically co-located with OMCs and fall under the umbrella of the SWMC. They will fall under the cognizance of the Commander, Navy Installation's (CNI) Regional Commander and thus be part of the local regional structure. RMT personnel assigned to RMCs will provide support and assistance to RMT personnel assigned to OMCs. Current regional chaplains will become RMC officers in charge (OIC). All personnel formerly assigned to CREDOs will be incorporated into the RMC structure as the Spiritual Fitness Division.

Religious Ministry Centers (RMC) will have five core functions:

- 1) Pastoral Care
- 2) Training and Professional Development
- 3) Mentoring and Coaching
- 4) Quality Management of Ministry
- 5) Force Integration

Pastoral Care: The first priority of the RMC will be to provide pastoral care to sailors and their families. Traditional ministerial activities such as providing divine services, religious education, and counseling will continue as our Corp's stock-in-trade through the RMC. RMCs will primarily focus on sailor-centric chapel programs to address the deck-plate needs of sea services personnel and their families. Chaplains and RPs assigned to the OMCs will contribute to chapel and operational support ministries. Strategic coordination for all ministries will come through the SWMC.

Training and Professional Development: Chaplain involvement in the professional training and education of commands, units, and sea warriors will transcend the current paradigm and include new areas such as character development, ethics, dealing with deployment stress, warrior transition, and other human development issues impacting a sea warrior's spiritual fitness. Every RMC will be assigned training specialists who will serve as resource personnel for OMC chaplains and RMTs to assist them in meeting the requirements of their various commands.

Mentoring and Coaching: The RMC chaplain and the senior RMC RP will provide supervision and advice, as well as encouragement, coaching, and mentoring for all installation chaplains and RPs working within their Region. Chaplains and senior RPs assigned to these critical positions will be trained and well versed in current policies, doctrines, institutional systems, and, in

particular, with the Five Vector Model and all RMT career management issues. The RMC will provide support to all SWMC chaplains whether assigned to deploying Strike Groups, the RSO, the RMC, or other ministries across the sea service enterprise.

Quality Management of Ministry: As the geopolitical climate changes and fleets transform to meet new challenges, mission needs and deployment concepts will evolve. These changes will require a change of mindset as to how our community will provide ministry to operational support units. For example, as technology advances, chaplains can anticipate that the size of a ship's company will decrease. As the global war on terrorism proceeds, we can anticipate that operational strike groups will be used in varied ways. Chaplains must prepare and plan for ministry in whatever operational configuration they may face. Although chaplains may not be assigned permanently to smaller platforms (FFGs, DDGs, or CGs), sea warriors will still need religious ministry and accommodation, quality ministry that cannot be delivered when chaplains act as *visiting firemen*. The OMC/RMC partnership, coordinated by an overarching SWMC, will ensure that quality ministry continues to be provided to sailors throughout an era of continual transformation.

Total Force Integration: One of the most exciting dimensions of the SWMC is its potential for total force integration. Reserve RMT integration into the active fleet forces is a priority for the Navy and thus the Chaplain Corps and the commanders we serve. One of the most important missions of the reserve community will be to provide *surge capacity* for all of our operational forces. Second, the time has come to capitalize on the experience, skills, and specialties of our reserve community. We must make a more deliberate effort to incorporate the special skills and abilities of our reserve brothers and sisters in all of our ministry programs. We must also plan for their full utilization at times of war and crisis. For example, RMC directors will be responsible for ensuring RMTs are fully integrated in the Regional Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) in every Region and, in collaboration with the OMC director, are expected to draw from all RMT assets in a particular region, regardless of command assignment, active or reserve designation. The region's most senior Coast Guard chaplain will be tasked to assist the Regional chaplain in creating current and future response plans for RMT personnel in the event of a homeland incident.

Sea Diagram Four: Appendix

SEA WARRIOR MINISTRY COUNCIL: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Chaplain Corps' very first SWMC will be established in Norfolk, Virginia. The Deputy CFFC Commander, Vice Admiral Cosgriff, and the Chaplain Corps Community Leader, Rear Admiral Iasiello, have agreed to the staff alignment, and the resources of FFC are currently beginning to implement the plan. Additional OMCs and RMCs will be established in Mayport and Groton by the end of this fiscal year. These sites are fleet concentration areas and superbly positioned to host SWMCs. The transition to SWMCs in other fleet concentration areas will gradually take place as Chaplain Corps alignment is completed, structures are created, and chaplains and commanders are trained in this new ministry delivery system.

See Diagrams Five and Six: Appendix

CONCLUSION

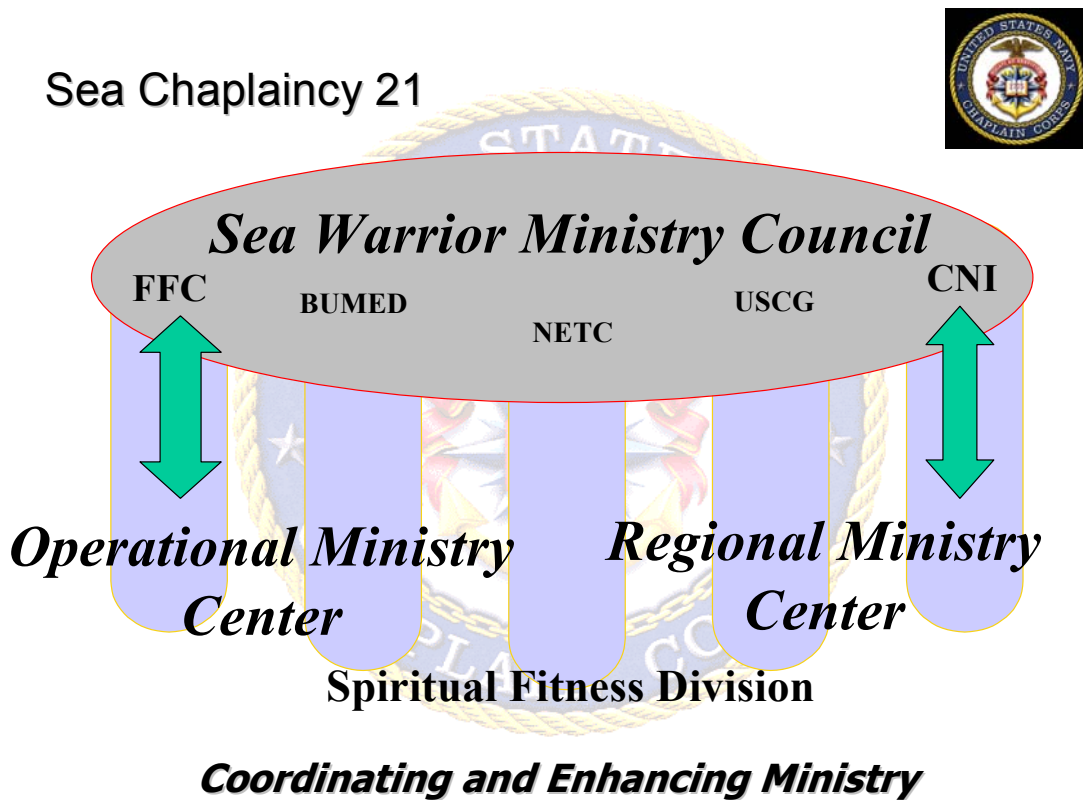
The global-war on terrorism and its impact on fleet response and subsequent fleet composition represent a unique 21st century challenge to the Chaplain Corps. We must face the inevitable changes that lie ahead and proactively move to meet emerging spiritual needs of our people. Chaplains and RPs must transition from traditional to new models of ministry to meet the needs of the people of God in the Sea Services. The Sea Warrior Ministry Council and its Operational Ministry and Regional Ministry Centers will provide us a new innovative ministry delivery model to meet the operational challenges of the 21st Century.

It is important to recognize that with all institutional change comes some element of risk, and so we should expect some successes and some challenges in regards to this new ministerial paradigm. Your prayers, support, and understanding are therefore critical ingredients to ensure we meet the challenges ahead.

I hope it is clear by now that this administration's approach to institutional and defense transformation is proactive. Your RROC and Chaplain Corps leadership fervently believe that the SWMC model will help us realize our primary mission to the sea services: to produce spiritually fit sea warriors, the most integral component of our nation's defense in the current Global War on Terrorism. Let us continue to pray and work for a just and lasting peace for all the peoples of the world.

Appendix

Diagram One



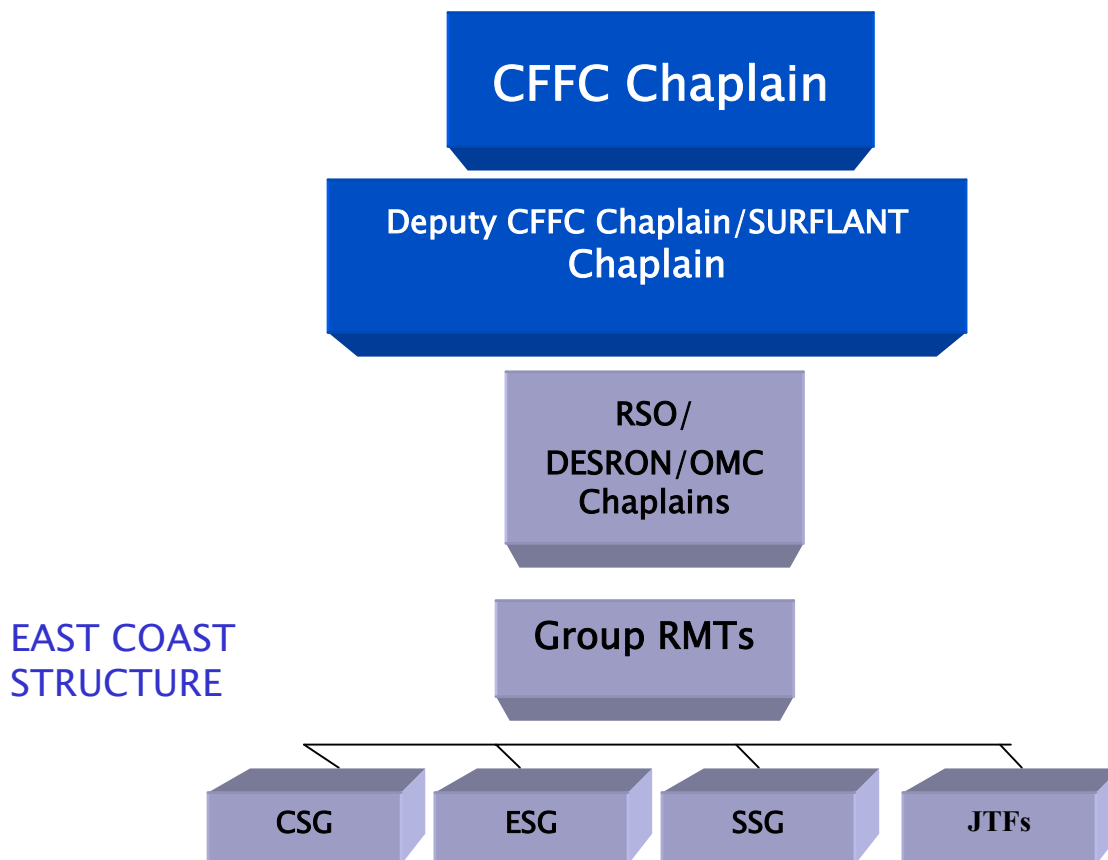
Sea Chaplaincy 21 and the Sea Warrior Ministry Council

The Sea Warrior Ministry Council (SWMC) is the coordinating body for religious ministry in a geographic area. Composed of the senior chaplain of the various lines of ministry represented in an area, the SWMC will meet on a regular basis to plan and execute common plans that provide horizontal integration to ministry functions. The Chair of the Council will be rotated between the Senior Regional and Operational Chaplains.

Diagram Two

Structure: Operational Ministry Center

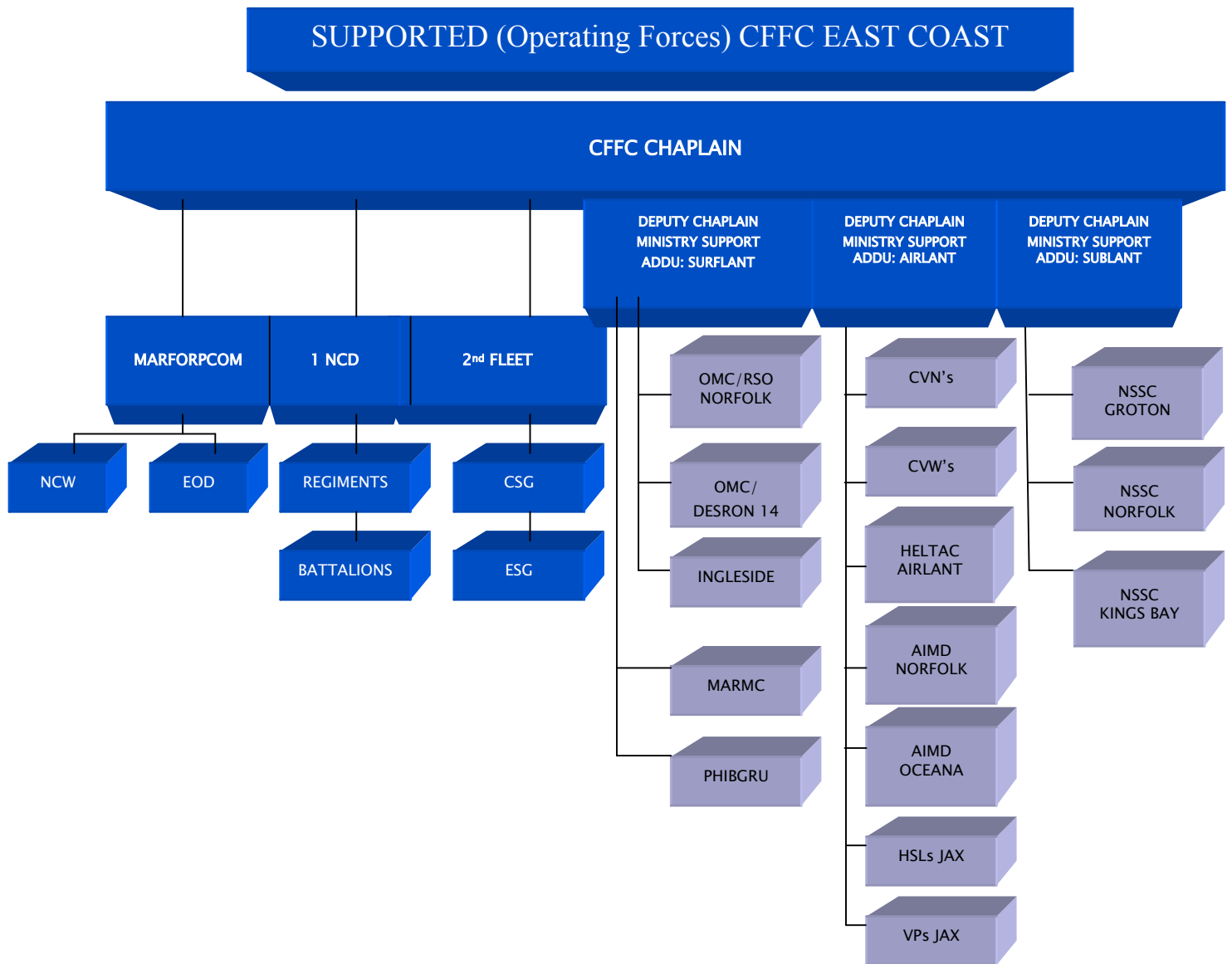
Mission Centric Staffing – The future of the Navy will be smaller and more capable ships with fewer members in the crew. These ships are able to be deployed in a wider variety of missions to meet the needs of the Combatant Commander conducting operations. Traditionally RMTs have been assigned by platform with one Squadron Chaplain to act as the rover to cover small ships that were not large enough to justify a separate RMT. To provide better coverage and ensure RMTs are able to meet the needs of personnel in a more effective manner, SC 21 will assign chaplains and RPs as a team to the Deploying Group. This permits the Group Commander through the Group Chaplain to distribute RMTs as needed to provide maximum coverage and distribution of assets. This concept is known as Mission Centric Staffing and is parallel to the Mission Configuration Staffing used for years in supporting Marine expeditionary ministry.



- Planned locations for Sea Warrior Ministry Councils (OMCs and RMCs in CFFC: 1) Norfolk; 2) Mayport; 3) Groton. (PACFLT is planning SWMCs in San Diego, Bremerton, Pearl Harbor, and Yokosuka.)
- OMCs will provide surge capability to augment Carrier Strike Groups (CSG)(2 Chaps and 1 RPs), Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG) (3 Chaps and 2 RPs), Surface Strike Groups (SSG) (1 Chap and 1 RP), and other Joint Task Force and other Operations
- OMC RMTs will be assigned to deploying Groups via a Detachment structure
- Once assigned to the Deploying Groups OMC RMTs will participate in Basic Phase certification via the Type Commander (TYCOM)
- Integrated and Sustainment Phase Certification will take place via the low numbered fleet
- Additional Operations include, but are not limited to, SNFL, UNITAS and TEAMWORK exercises

Diagram Three

The OMC and its Strategic Role in the Operational Forces

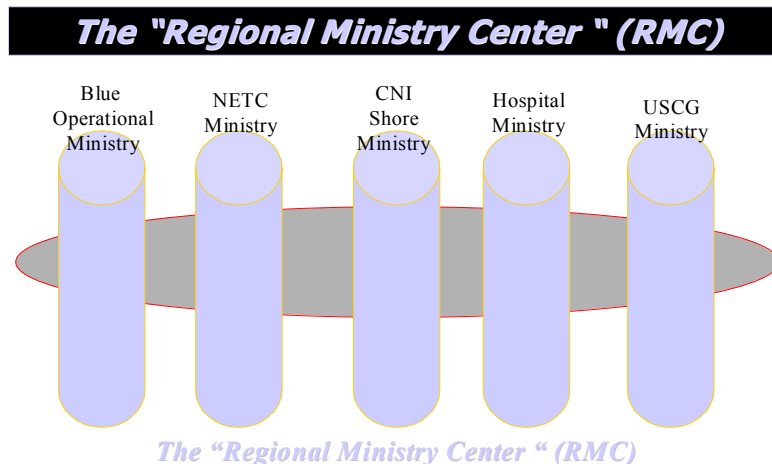


The OMC concept in the operational forces does much more than create centers for ministry in the Regional Support Organizations (RSO) or Destroyer Squadrons designated as geographical ISICs for assigned surface force units (see more on RSOs on page 8). As illustrated above, the entire structure of providing ministry in the operational forces is aligned under SC21 to match the current FFC structure. Additional deputies are provided for the FFC chaplain, who will have specific type and area responsibilities. Additionally, RMTs are placed in commands with sailors. Note the additional commands under the Air TYCOM, which will now have RMTs integral to their structure. The new Maritime Forces Protection Command will also receive its own RMTs.

Diagram Four

The Regional Ministry Center

Sea Chaplaincy 21



The Regional Ministry Center will be co-located in the same facility with the OMC wherever possible. This will enhance the day-by-day interaction between the personnel assigned to supporting and supported commands. Chaplains and RPs will be assigned to both OMCs and RMCs. The Sea Warrior Ministry Council is charged with oversight and coordination to ensure full cooperation and support from all chaplains and RPs in a geographic area. This structure is designed to facilitate effective and efficient delivery of ministry for all authorized personnel.

The RMC is a supporting structure. It will incorporate skills and resources, in a centralized structure, that can be used in supporting RMTs of all the lines of ministry teams in the area. The RMC will be a resource and center for development and training for all members of the Chaplain Corps and the Religious Program Specialist Rating. The RMC will work directly under the supervision of the Regional Chaplain with the Regional Commander or his/her designee as their reporting senior.

Diagram Five

Sea Warrior Ministry Council Seamless Ministry Coverage

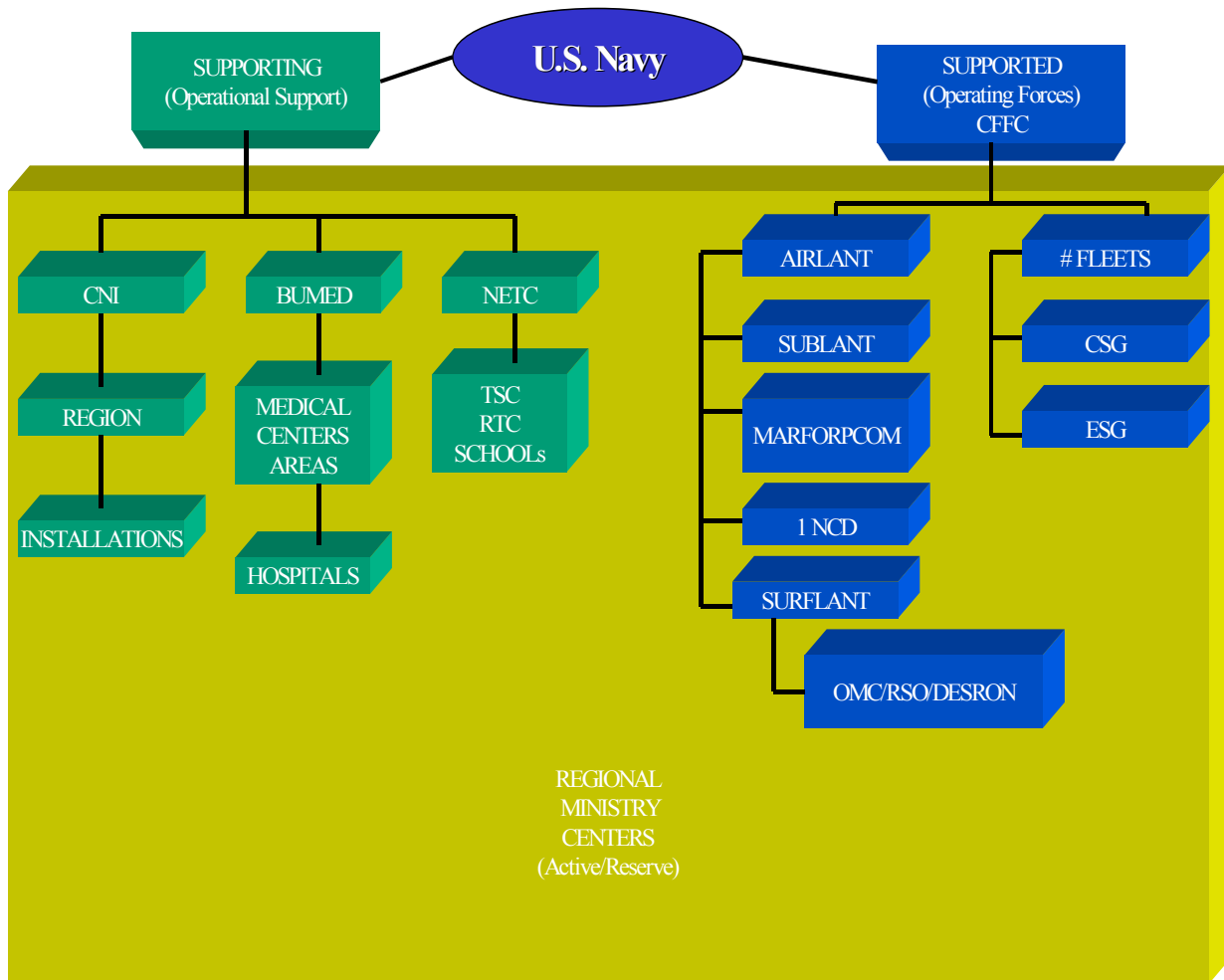
A Balanced Approach to Area Religious Ministry Support



The SWMC is charged with balancing competing interests between the three concerns mentioned in the boxes above. SC21 seeks to preserve the relationship between the command and the RMT while also recognizing the need to share ministry across command lines in a geographic area so that every Sea Warrior is supported in his or her religious needs. This requires true collaborative ministry with seamless cooperation and strategic vision.

Diagram Six

Supporting versus Supported Commands



The diagram above illustrates the relationships in today's Navy of supporting and supported commands. Supporting commands provide assets and assistance as needed to enable the supported command to respond to combatant commanders' taskings. Fleet Forces Command (CFFC) is the primary supported command on the East Coast.

The OMC is part of the supported command structure. The RMC is part of the supporting command structure. The SWMC provides management across the enterprise, organizing and implementing ministry to sea warriors and their families.

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